

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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SSO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-02 INRE-00 EA-06 CIAE-00 INR-05

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 1115

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5191

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UNGA CB PO

SUBJ: KHMER AT 29TH UNGA: PORTUGAL

REF: STATE 259585 AND PREVIOUS

1. EMBASSY THIS MORNING WAS INFORMED BY SOARES' CHIEF OF CABINET CUNHA REGO THAT FOREIGN OFFICE HAD BEEN ADVISED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT THAT THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DECISION TO ABSTAIN ON THE ASEAN RESOLUTION WOULD STAND. HE THEREFORE RECOMMENDED CALL ON PRIME MINISTER.

2. AMBASSADOR AND DCM HAD ONE HOUR DISCUSSION WITH GONCALVES THIS AFTERNOON. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION AMBASSADOR WAS ABLE TO PRESENT ALL AVAILABLE ARGUMENTS, INCLUDING THE ARGUMENT THAT PORTUGAL'S POSITION ON THIS ISSUE MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS AN INDICATOR OF AN ALTERATION IN PORTUGAL'S INTERNATIONAL POSTURE.

3. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT PORTUGAL'S POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT HAD NOT BEEN ARRIVED AT LIGHTLY BUT ONLY AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND WITH THE PRESIDENT. GOP HAS NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF DOING ANYTHING THAT WOULD HARM THE INTERESTS OF ITS FRIENDS, EITHER ITS TRADITIONAL FRIENDS INCLUDING ESPECIALLY THE

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UNITED STATES NOR THE NEW FRIENDS IT IS DEVELOPING IN THE

THIRD WORLD. HE SAID THAT THE GOP FELT THAT BY ABSTAINING THEY WOULD NOT HARM U.S. INTERESTS. MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THEIR DECISION TO ABSTAIN WAS THE REFLECTION A VOTE IN FAVOR COULD HAVE AMONG THOSE AFRICAN AND ARAB NATIONS WHOSE SYMPATHETIC ASSISTANCE PORTUGAL CONSIDERS VITAL IN THE CRUCIAL DECOLONIZATION PROCESS. HE ASKED THAT THE USG PUT ITSELF IN THE POSITION OF THE GOP. IT IS AN OVERRIDING INTEREST OF PORTUGAL THAT THE DECOLONIZATION PROCESS BE CARRIED FORWARD AS SMOOTHLY AS POSSIBLE. CONSEQUENTLY PORTUGAL FEELS IT CAN DO NOTHING THAT MIGHT ANTAGONIZE AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN GENERAL AND SPECIFICALLY THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH SUPPORT THE VARIOUS LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. (AN ATTEMPT AT THIS POINT TO REMIND HIM THAT THE DECOLONIZATION PROCESS IN TIMOR MIGHT NOT BE HELPED BY GOP FAILURE TO SUPPORT A RESOLUTION SPONSORED BY INDONESIA FAILED TO ELICIT A RESPONSE). IN CONCLUDING, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD AS A RESULT OF THE DEMARCHE REVIEW THEIR POSITION ON THE MATTER AND SEEK TO COLLECT AS MUCH RELEVANT INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE.

4. HE AND WE ARE ASSUMING THAT DELAY IN DEBATE DUE TO DEATH OF U THANT MEANS THAT NO VOTING WILL TAKE PLACE UNTIL NOVEMBER 28, GIVING TIME FOR THE MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TOMORROW WITH SOARES PRESENT. IN THE MEANTIME, REQUEST URGENTLY FULL BREAKDOWN OF EXPECTED PRO AND CON VOTES. IN THIS CONNECTION COMMENT BY PROTOCOL OFFICER PRESENT AT THE MEETING IS MOST APT; HE SAID THAT IF U.S. CAN PRODUCE SOME AFRICAN AND ARAB COUNTRIES IN THE PRO COLUMN, PORTUGAL MAY WELL SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION.
SCOTT

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